

**MAYOR AND COUNCIL STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA SUBCOMMITTEE**  
**RIO NUEVO/DOWNTOWN, ARTS, CULTURE AND HISTORY**  
**LEGAL ACTION REPORT/ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION REPORT**

Thursday, December 14, 2006

Ward 6, 3202 E. 1<sup>st</sup> Street

Tucson, Arizona

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:	Council Member Nina Trasoff, Subcommittee Chair, Ward 6 Council Member Jose Ibarra, Ward 1 Council Member Steve Leal, Ward 5
STAFF LIAISON:	Greg Shelko, Rio Nuevo Director

AGENDA ITEM/MAYOR AND COUNCIL ACTION	STAFF ACTION
<b>1. Call to Order</b>  The meeting was called to order at 5:02 p.m.	
<b>4. Call to the Audience</b>  Roger Karber, Chairman of the Tucson Downtown Alliance (TDA) spoke about TDA's efforts in support of a balanced mix of uses for the TIF monies. They had a role in convincing the State Legislature to extend the TIF and they assured the legislators that they would do everything in their power to ensure the balanced investment of TIF funds. They believe the City Manager's balance distribution of \$200 million for the west side, \$200 million for the east side, and \$150 for infrastructure improvements is fair until all projects are evaluated. They've prepared a list of projects needing funding in the public sector and those needing infrastructure in the private sector and they request an opportunity to present their plan on how the TIF funds can be invested to achieve maximum results.  Don Durband, Executive Director of TDA amplified Mr. Karber's comments. He said there are many competing needs and desired projects, and they exist in a physically aging urban area. Downtown was neglected. Sixty acres on the west side were contaminated by a landfill, there are aging streets, old sewer systems, old lighting systems, old underpasses, broken sidewalks and few streetscape amenities. He asks the City to adopt a balanced approach to allocation of the TIF monies and invest strategically in projects to create amenities and attractions that are economic generators. In addition to cultural attractions, people want shopping, dining and entertainment. Fair consideration of the proposed projects should be given, and a full airing by the community that includes costs, economic impacts, and opportunities should take place. He presented a list of guiding principles that the TDA Board of Directors developed to guide the investments of TIF funds.  Richard Oseran, owner of Hotel Congress agreed Messrs. Karber and Durband. He's in favor of the infrastructure needs being done first. If projects aren't phased in appropriately, we might end up with a beautiful area west of the freeway and a decaying inner city with no money left to create the infrastructure.	

### 3. Capital Funding Request of \$53.7 Million for West Side Infrastructure Projects and Mission San Agustin and Tucson Origins Heritage Park

Mr. Shelko gave the chronological history of the activity to date on the westside. Most recently, approval was received to construct Avenida del Convento, extend Cushing Street, complete landfill remediation and construct El Presidio de Tucson on the east side of the freeway. In June, approval was received to hire a design team and construction manager at risk to implement the Tucson Origins Master Plan. With a significant amount of community input received, staff is asking for funding approval in the amount of \$53.7 million for the following:

#### 1) Final Design & Construction

- \$ 21.5 million Mission Agustin (including Mission Gardens, the Mission Complex, Desert Garden/Native American, Agricultural Area and Festival Area)
- \$ 6.0 million Site Work and Utilities
- \$ 8.9 million Landfill Remediation
- \$ 6.0 million Cushing Roadway and Bridge Over the Santa Cruz River
- \$ 4.0 million Roadways at Cultural Plaza
- \$ 4.1 million Design and Construction Management

#### 2) Program and Design Development

- \$ 1.9 million Origins Center Program and Design Development
- \$ 1.3 million Parking program and Design Development

#### **\$53.7 million TOTAL FUNDING REQUEST**

The Origins Interpretative Center is not included in this request.

Ms. McCune, Historical Preservation Officer discussed how historical data was gathered to come up with the final conceptual design for the buildings. The site, which was a beautiful area, was severely degraded, and this project will heal the site. She summarized how public input was gathered using advisory teams with subject matter experts and stakeholders from the community and working closely with the Menlo Park Neighborhood Association.

David Wald-Hopkins presented the concept design and described the project elements. Some of his comments follow:

- Neighborhood meetings were held to ensure the project was compatible with the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Many landfill areas still need to be remediated;

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- Modeling was used to make sure the buildings transition properly from the existing neighborhood.
  - The cultural plaza could potentially contain 500 parking spaces below grade, with a modern streetcar station on the north end, and some on-street parking.
  - The festival area would serve as a large community gathering space with the Origins Center as a backdrop or stage for performances.
  - Pedestrian elements would include water. Acequias, some following their original paths would be recreated.
  - In addition to the Mission and Convento, the granary, cemetery, livestock and orchard areas would also be recreated.
  - Mission Lane would be turned in to a tree-lined lane.
  - The Carrillo House would be used to interpret the Mexican American period.
  - The area west of the Mission Complex would serve as the Native American/archaeology area. The area was not disbursed by landfill and the archaeology remains below grade, so if at all possible the area will not be disturbed. The Tohono O'Odham will be invited to help plan this part and the area will have an immediate relationship to the Arizona State Museum.
  - Mission Gardens will be a walled in 4-acre parcel divided into Spanish and American Indian areas.
  - An interpretative walk-through document details the experience through a family's eyes.
  - Ramadas located throughout the park will contain displays telling the story of the last 4,000 years.
  - Stormwater management techniques will be used to collect water coming off of "A" Mountain to assist with flooding issues some the nearby neighborhoods experience. It will be stored and reintroduced to the site to feed the irrigation system.
  - The Origins Center is conceived as shared space with the museums, containing exhibit space, an orientation theater, holding administrative offices, and containing a café and gift shop. It would serve as the entrance to the park. The design is modern and the build would contain sustainable practices. Mr. Wald-Hopkins reiterated that this is not included in the funding request. Discussions continue with the museums.
  - The only thing they know about the chapel was obtained from a drawing and some rock foundations that were recorded in 1950's. They also know that the chapels were modeled in Mexico. A picture of a mission in Oquitoa was shown. They also worked with historians and archaeologists to come up with a design. It's really not a copy of anything that existed. It's a Tucson original.
  - The Convento design is more accurate. Computer modeling was used. Period furnishing and exhibits will be used to feature the church's occupation of the site. It was a two-story structure with a stairway, but there will not be any access to the second story, because it would require an elevator, which wouldn't help tell the story well.
  - The Carrillo House is well documented in 1930's photographs and is the easiest
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one to record.

Mr. O'Malley summarized that the funding does not include construction of the Origins Center or the parking structure. Only design costs are included to resolve the program and size of the building and parking structure.

Peg Weber, Parks and Recreation (P&R) Administrator explained how her department along with a non-profit organization would manage the park similar to how the zoo is run. A management partnership with the Arizona State Museum, Arizona Historical Society, University of Arizona Science Center, Tucson Children's Museum would also be involved. In addition, an Advisory Council representing the neighborhood association, the DeAnza group, the State Parks, the Kino Fruit Trees group, and other interested groups would assist. Another partnership is the Presidio Trust. She expressed excitement about the festival that would be held there.

Tom Martin, from ConsultEcon talked about the operations and economic issues of the project. He supports the City's decision to pursue the model being used by the zoo. He talked about the tourist and resident markets that are growing. They also looked at staffing, pricing, and operating budgets. They project attendance at 338,000 people; however, they are currently looking at figures along with the other museums and the figure increases 18-20%. In his opinion, the project has the potential to do well.

Should today's funding request be approved, Mr. O'Malley outlined the project schedule.

#### 2007

January - Archaeological investigations would start.

May - El Presidio and the Avenida de Convento would be completed.

October - Adobe bricks would start being laid.

#### 2008

July - Mission Gardens and the Carrillo House would open

#### 2009

- Entire Tucson Origins complex would open.

Mr. Shelko advised that the Rio Nuevo Citizens Advisory Committee approved the funding by a vote of 9 to 3, the Rio Nuevo Board unanimously approved the funding and the Menlo Park Neighborhood Association supports the project.

Council Member Leal noted there are still questions with the project and cited a couple. Should the Origins Center be a modern building? Will the second story of the Convento be built to accommodate future access at a later point?

*Council Member Leal made a motion to bring the project forward to the full Mayor and Council and requested that staff provide a tentative list of all projects proposed for Rio Nuevo along with their estimated dollar amounts at that time. Council Member Ibarra seconded the motion.*

*Mr. Ibarra said its time for the Mayor & Council to start voting on these projects, so staff knows where they stand and don't waste time working on things they don't want. He's tired of the community perception that nothing is being done.*

*Ms. Trasoff disagreed with the motion – not in approving the funding request, but in tying the funding request to a request for staff to provide a full list of projects and funding allocations. She doesn't think enough is known to demand that kind of list next week. However, she didn't want to vote against the Tucson Origins funding request which she believes is the cornerstone of what the community was promised, so for that reason she agreed to it.*

*Motion passed unanimously 3 to 0.*

#### **4. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:27 p.m.